

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DENVER – October 29, 2013 – The PEAK website is allowing Colorado residents to enroll in state health coverage, and financial and food assistance programs. Upgrades made to Colorado.gov/PEAK on October 1 now allow Coloradans who fill out their applications completely and accurately to find out if they qualify for coverage online.

"PEAK allows Coloradans to apply for coverage anytime, anywhere," said Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN, executive director. "With the rollout of health care reform, we have seen a surge in Medicaid applications. The upgrades to PEAK are allowing us to more efficiently process those applications to ensure Coloradans are getting the coverage they need. The advances we have put in place are taking a process that used to take 45 days to be as short as 30-45 minutes. This new self-application is an important step for Coloradans to become more active and engaged with their own health care coverage."

Since the upgrades have been in place, Colorado.gov/PEAK has processed <u>6-9 times the amount of applications each day</u> with an average of 700 new accounts created per day. Coloradans can apply for medical assistance programs like Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus*, food assistance and other state programs through Colorado.gov/PEAK.

Many Coloradans will qualify for Medicaid coverage for the first time on January 1, 2014. This change in Medicaid will expand coverage to more than 160,000 Coloradans.

Visiting the PEAK website and filling out the application is the first step to getting covered. Coloradans who prefer to apply for coverage offline have several options; they can apply in person at a county human services office or assistance site, on the phone or by mail.

For more information about health law changes visit <u>Colorado.gov/health</u>. If you have questions about the PEAK application see our online list of <u>frequently asked questions</u>. For more information about Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus* visit <u>Colorado.gov/hcpf</u>.

About the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing: The department administers the Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) programs as well as a variety of other health insurance programs for low-income Coloradans who qualify. The mission of the department is to improve health care access and outcomes for the people we serve while demonstrating sound stewardship of financial resources. For more information about the department, please visit <u>Colorado.gov/hcpf</u>.

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Application Tips for Colorado.gov/PEAK

Coloradans filling out complete and accurate applications can find out if they qualify for Medicaid or Child Health Plan Plus more quickly. You can apply for financial and food assistance programs online too. Below are tips for Coloradans to remember when filling out the online application at Colorado.gov/PEAK. National and state databases are checked to verify citizenship, identity and income. If there are errors with the information you provide on your application, your application could be delayed.

Before You Start

- ✓ Full names, dates of birth, and Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for the people applying for benefits.
- ✓ If someone in your home is pregnant, the due date and number of babies for that pregnancy.
- ✓ If someone is working, pay check stubs for that person's job(s). We will ask how much each person makes at his/her job, how often he/she is paid, and how many hours he/she works.
- ✓ Benefit check stubs or award letters for types of income, such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Child Support. We will ask when these types of benefits started, how much is received, and how often it is received.
- ✓ If someone is self-employed, last year's tax return for his/her selfemployment (if he/she filed taxes for the business). Otherwise, try to gather information about his/her income and expenses for the business.
- ✓ How much you pay each month for housing (examples: rent, lot rent, mortgage, property taxes, or homeowner's insurance).
- ✓ How much you pay each month for utilities (examples: electricity, gas, phone, water, and trash removal).
- ✓ How much you pay for someone's care (example: day care for your children)
 and who provides the care.
- ✓ If you are applying for food assistance, we will ask about the total amount of money you have at home and in your checking accounts and savings accounts.

Top Reasons Your Application Could Be Delayed - Tips to Remember

If we can't verify your identity, citizenship or other identifying information, your application could be delayed. Use your full legal name, for you and for all members of the household.

- ✓ Double check the Social Security Numbers you provided.
- ✓ Double check the birth dates you provided.
- ✓ Fill in the application as completely and accurately as possible.

If you have questions about the PEAK application see our online list of <u>frequently</u> asked questions available on Colorado.gov/health or call 1-800-221-3943.